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## Press Tour

### [WKSU: Proposal Offers Help for Workers Displaced by Automation](#)

August 27, 2019; Andy Chow

Ohio's top Democratic officeholder is touring the state pushing for a way to soften the blow for workers who lose their job to automation.

U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown wants a law requiring companies to give workers 100 days advanced notice if they're going to be displaced by new technology, six months of severance pay after that, and on-the-job training for possible advancement.

Brown believes this creates a social contract that demands more respect for the workers.

"Too many of these companies, too many of these very well-paid, multi-million dollar corporate executives treat their workforce as a cost to be minimized."

Brown believes this bill could receive bipartisan support but admits it would have a tough time getting a floor vote with current Senate leadership.

He plans to visit six communities including Lima, Mansfield, and St. Clairsville.

### [Ironton Tribune: Focus on Workers' Interests](#)

September 7, 2019; Editorial Board

U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown, D-Ohio, has been making the rounds in the state lately to discuss the loss of jobs due to changing technology.

While innovation and progress can often benefit workers, it is still a fact that advances in technology can also lead to the elimination of positions as processes change and the old way of doing business can become an outdated model.

Brown was in Youngstown on Thursday, where he introduced workers' Right to Training Act of 2019.

The legislation would require companies to provide advance notice to workers if cuts will be made due to technological changes. The company would also have to provide for the cost of retraining.

While companies should have the right to adapt when the economy demands it, the human costs of these changes should never be taken lightly when business leaders make such calculations.

One person's idea of savings can mean the livelihood of a family.

We are so glad that Brown is starting a discussion with this legislation to get these issues addressed so that workers are not left behind.

### [Lima News: Can Lima region stay ahead of automation?](#)

September 8, 2019; Mackenzi Klemann

LIMA — A heavy concentration of production, material-moving and transportation jobs exposes the Lima region to the potential for labor force disruption driven by automation. Can Lima stay ahead?

While the relationship between automation and job loss is not exact, the risk for technologically driven disruption in this region is high: About 32% of jobs in the region contain a high share of automatable tasks, according to a [2019 analysis from the Brookings Institution](#).

The problem is even more acute in Mercer County, where nearly 40% of jobs analyzed by Brookings researchers are exposed to automation.

“The way that automation works is it does not replace jobs, it replaces distinct tasks that workers do,” said Robert Maxim, a senior research analyst with the Brookings Institute, who co-authored the report. “Those tasks can be done in multiple different jobs.”

So while a mechanical arm does not replace a factory worker, Maxim explained, the technology does eliminate one task that workers previously had been responsible for. The more tasks eliminated, the fewer workers needed.

The study classified jobs as high risk when more than 70% of daily tasks are automatable.

That includes fast-food workers and waiters — two of the most common “high risk” occupations in the region— who are already seeing their work change through the introduction of ordering kiosks and new restaurant technologies.

But the greatest challenge for the region will be the potential disruption in manufacturing and transportation.

The region employs more than 2,000 heavy truck drivers and 1,500 machinists, occupations paying a median wage of nearly \$20 per hour and which are heavily comprised of automatable tasks, according to the Brookings report.

The best way to mitigate losses, Maxim said, is for local economies to diversify.

The solution is more complicated for individuals whose skills are rendered obsolete.

Educators are already adopting robotics and automated technologies in their vocational classrooms to prepare students for an evolving workforce. The timeline that new technologies are introduced locally, however, can be hard to predict.

“It’s not that there aren’t going to be any jobs,” said Ben Frail, division head of robotics and automation at the University of Northwestern Ohio. “They will be different. It’s a big misconception that the jobs replaced by automation are just gone — you need people to install the equipment, maintain the equipment, program the equipment and repair the equipment.”

For every job eliminated by robotics or automation, Frail said four new positions are created.

“As long as someone is willing to be retrained with the new technology,” Frail said, “there are countless new job opportunities for them.”

Maxim agreed that workers will need to remain versatile as their workplaces change. Continuing education — including vocational credentials — will become even more important.

“Workers will need to develop a set of skills for the work that is available in the local labor market in the short run,” Maxim said, “and then they’re also going to (need) an ancillary set of skills that will allow them to adapt and may find new work if their current job changes significantly or is even eliminated.”

Should employers pay? Sen. Sherrod Brown is pushing that idea as he recently introduced legislation that would require companies to give notice to employees and provide on-the-job training when jobs will be changed or eliminated by new technologies, which Brown compared to the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notices requiring companies to give notice of mass layoffs.

“The concern is when you start seeing more robots show up, you start seeing more machines that take less and less people to operate – that’s when we start losing jobs,” said Michael Copeland, president of the United Auto Workers 1219 in Lima. “Our concern is that we have more control over the timeline. If we get the information (early), we can prepare when those changes are going to happen.”

“We’re directly affected by changes,” he said. “All we want to be able to control our destiny a little bit more.”

## Lima – August 30, 2019

### Lima News: Brown holds automation roundtable

August 30, 2019; Mackenzi Klemann

LIMA — Anticipating widespread disruption from autonomous vehicles, artificial intelligence and other emerging technologies that could eliminate thousands of jobs, US. Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-OH) is introducing legislation that would require companies to warn and retrain workers whose jobs are changed or lost by new technologies.

Brown unveiled his plan to a roundtable of union leaders, school officials and local leaders at the UAW Local 1219 hall in Lima on Friday to learn how such legislation could benefit workers in the community.

“Too many workers are left behind when companies decide to adopt new technology,” Brown said. “We must work to ensure that workers aren’t treated as a cost to be minimized but rather treated with the dignity they’ve earned to have an equal say in how best to implement new technology in the workplace.”

Brown’s legislation would require companies to give 180 days’ notice to workers whose jobs will be changed by new technologies and 270 days’ notice when jobs will be eliminated, according to a brief provided by Brown’s office.

Companies would also be required to bargain directly with workers when implementing new technologies and to pay for retraining programs to help those displaced by automation to find new work within the same or similar field.

And companies who eliminate jobs would be required to pay six month’s severance to workers who are terminated as the result of new technologies.

Brown plans to introduce his legislation, the Workers' Right to Training Act, when Congress resumes in September.

Allen County is particularly vulnerable to automation-related disruption.

The Brookings Institution, a Washington, D.C.-based think tank, found that 32.5% of jobs in this county are at high-risk of exposure to automation.

Occupations with the largest share of workers whose jobs are most susceptible to automation include food preparation, heavy freight truck drivers, servers, stock clerks, order fillers and machinists.

Jason Frey, a secretary and treasurer for the Teamsters Local 908 union, already worries about the potential for autonomous vehicles to displace truck drivers, despite the industry's struggle to find enough drivers to fill positions today.

"If I had a son right now that's graduating, I would tell him stay away from the truck driving industry because we don't know how long that's going to be there," Frey said. "If these self-driving trucks develop, you could be signing up for a job that could be gone in another 15-20 years."

The potential for emerging technologies to disrupt Lima's economy is something that worries Mayor David Berger, too.

"I've got a refinery on one side of town and I've got an engine plant on the other, and when electrified vehicles or autonomous vehicles come to the fore in large numbers, the disruption will be enormous," said Lima Mayor David Berger. "I think anticipating that disruption, even when we've got as strong an economy as we have now, is exactly what needs to happen. ... We have to have a pipeline of resources to anticipate that, both from a training standpoint and from a social service standpoint."

### [Lima WLIO-TV: Sen. Brown discusses challenges to workers' rights to training during round table meeting](#)

August 30, 2019; Eran Hami

Sen. Sherrod Brown met with union leaders to discuss some possible new legislation. What it turned into was finding out there are more challenges to be addressed in the manufacturing industry.

A round table discussion between Brown and leaders started out talking about brown's proposed Workers' Right to Training Act of 2019.

"If you're going to bring in technology, which they're going to I'm fine with that and it's going to displace workers, you need to re-train those workers," Brown said, a Democratic senator from Mansfield, OH. "Give them notice before the technology comes in and give them training so they can operate this technology and be successful."

The bill would require employers to give six months notice to employees if new technology is coming in. It would then require those employers to pay for training for employees in a new position or to work with the technology. If employees lose their jobs because of the change, they would be required a six-month severance package.

Some members of the discussion asked about roadblocks for the legislation which brown said it has a reasonable chance to get through the house.

As discussions went on, more union representatives voiced other concerns outside of training. Some say people won't stay around because of the pay, employers are reluctant to pay for more training and skilled trade positions aren't being filled due to a lack of available experience. One company has lowered their requirements and started hiring students right after graduation.

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"We've got to scale up our career centers and Rhodes State and schools that are training welders and electricians and computer operators and nurses," said Brown. "And people that are— you know don't necessarily need a four-year degree but you need training so you can do this."

Brown has also visited Akron and will be hearing from people in Mansfield, St. Clairsville, Youngstown and Toledo about his new bill.

## Mansfield – September 3, 2019

[Richland Source: Sherrod Brown to host Mansfield roundtable involving labor organizations](#)

September 1, 2019; Staff

MANSFIELD, OH – On Tuesday, Sept. 3, U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown (D-OH) will host a roundtable in Mansfield as he prepares to introduce legislation to provide critical resources to workers when companies decide to adopt new technology that will affect their jobs.

The event is slated for 11:30 a.m. at the United Steelworkers Local 169 headquarters, 376 Longview Ave. West, Mansfield, Ohio, 44903.

Brown will be joined at the roundtable discussion by representatives from local labor organizations and worker advocates to talk about his bill and ways to support workers in the face of increased automation.

Brown's Workers' Right to Training Act of 2019 would:

- Require companies to provide 180 days advanced notice to workers when new technology will change employment positions and provide 270 days advanced notice if jobs will be eliminated. Employers must bargain directly with employees on how best to implement new technology.
- Require employers to pay for and provide on-the-job training to any employees who will be affected by the introduction of new technology. Companies must either provide training to employees whose jobs will change as a result of new technology or to employees who will lose their job to help these workers obtain a different position at a similar company.
- Require employers to provide six-month severance to all workers who lose their jobs as a result of new technology.

[Mansfield News Journal: Sherrod Brown, in Mansfield visit, previews legislation to protect workers](#)

September 3, 2019; Monroe Trombly

MANSFIELD - Ohio Sen. Sherrod Brown paid a visit to his hometown Tuesday, hosting a roundtable discussion at a union hall and previewing legislation that is geared towards supporting workers in the face of technological changes.

The legislation, which Brown intends to introduce next week, would require companies to provide advance notice of any technology changes that may affect workers' jobs, and to provide training to workers in advance of adopting new technology.

"Our 'Right to Train' bill simply says it's pretty clear that when people lose their jobs because of technology, companies owe something to these workers in terms of giving them notice and in terms of retraining them," Brown said in a meeting at USW Local 169 union hall.

The Workers' Right to Training Act would:

- Require companies to provide 180 days' advanced notice to workers when new technology will change employment positions, and provide 270 days' advanced notice if jobs will be eliminated. Employers must bargain directly with employees on how best to implement new technology.
- Require employers to pay for and provide on-the-job training to any employees who will be affected by the introduction of new technology. Companies must either provide training to employees whose jobs will change as a result of new technology or to employees who will lose their jobs to help these workers obtain a different position at a similar company.
- Require employers to provide six months of severance pay to all workers who lose their jobs as a result of new technology.

The Ohio Democratic senator said he hears from workers who have been displaced or lost their jobs due to increased automation or from the implementation of new technology that's aimed at increasing efficiency.

"We've got to make sure that these workers are given notice so they know what's coming and that they have a chance to retrain," Brown said.

Brown, who grew up in Mansfield and graduated from Mansfield Senior High School, said he spent time at the USW Local 169 hall when he was in the state legislature.

"I grew up here learning about this place, learning about work and the dignity of work," he added.

The Ohio Senator has long been a proponent of workers' rights. This past summer, Brown's office partnered with local businesses and community leaders to host 27 manufacturing summer camps in 21 Ohio counties, including Richland. The camps, which expose students to local manufacturing companies and potential career paths, are geared specifically toward students in fourth through eighth grades.

Brown said that workers across the state have lost their jobs when companies move production overseas to cut costs, a trend he says has been exacerbated by President Donald Trump's trade policies and the corporate tax cut passed in 2017.

"We've seen a government that has passed trade laws that have caused more outsourcing of jobs," Brown said. "We've seen that President Trump's tax bill gives huge tax breaks to companies that shut down production in Mansfield, Shelby, Ontario or Lexington and move overseas, and the president has

got to stop doing that. Part of the reason that communities are hurting is bad trade agreements, tax law that too often helps fat cats, like the president who doesn't help workers."

Brown spent a portion of Tuesday morning gathering input from local labor leaders other worker advocates.

Norm Shoemaker, president of the Mid Ohio Area AFL-CIO Council, said ArcelorMittal in Shelby, where he works, holds more of the market "than we've ever before."

"We've also set records on yield because of technology," Shoemaker said. "Here this year, we've been able to reduce scrap by huge margins. Therefore, we've got more people working there, but we are getting more tons per manpower."

Shoemaker was joined by Mike Jewel, president of United Steel Workers Local 169, Steve Ackerman, vice-president of USW Local 169, Mike Carroll, benefits representative of USW Local 169, Carl Neutzling, business manager of International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 688, Dave Funk, vice president of Teamsters Local 40, and Dr. Dorey Diab, president of North Central State College, among others.

Several people said that there is high demand for more tradesmen and skilled workers, and questions were raised as to how more young people could be encouraged to pick up a trade rather than go to a university to get a traditional four-year degree.

"We're a pretty well-kept secret," Funk said of the trade unions.

### [WMFD: Senator Sherrod Brown Hosts Roundtable in Mansfield](#)

September 3, 2019; WMFD Digital Team

**MANSFIELD, OH** - U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown hosted a roundtable discussion in Mansfield as he prepares to introduce the *Workers' Right to Training Bill*. The new legislation ensures workers receive advanced notice and increased training when companies decide to adopt new technology.

"No matter how technology changes, Ohio workers will always be our greatest resource," Brown said. "But right now, too many workers are left behind when companies decide to adopt new technology. We must work to ensure that workers aren't treated as a cost to be minimized but rather treated with the dignity they've earned to have equal say in how best to implement new technology in the workplace."

Brown was joined at the roundtable by local labor unions and worker advocates, including Norm Shoemaker, President of the Mid Ohio Area Labor Council. Norm said, "Mid Ohio Area Labor Council supports Senator Sherrod Brown and is honored to sit down along with local labor leaders and discuss Senator Brown's new legislation to protect employees' jobs. Advancement in technology helps improve working conditions and efficiency, this is very important to the workforce, so is retaining employment."

Specifically, Brown's bill would: Require companies to provide 180 days advanced notice to workers when new technology will change employment positions and provide 270 days advanced notice if jobs will be eliminated. Employers must bargain directly with employees on how best to implement new technology. The bill would also require employers to pay for and provide on-the-job training to any employees who will be effected by the introduction of new technology. Companies must either provide training to employees whose jobs will change as a result of new technology or to employees who will lose their job to help these workers obtain a different position at a similar company. And lastly, the bill



would require employers to provide six-month severance to all workers who lose their jobs as a result of new technology.

By mandating employers consult and compensate employees whose jobs are changed or lost due to technology, the *Workers' Right to Training Act* will ensure the adoption of technology in the workplace will be done in a just way for workers. By helping workers affected by technology to receive the training they need, the bill will also help to ensure the U.S. workforce remains high-skilled and capable of competing in a global economy.

### [Richland Source: Sen. Brown talks legislation to increase employee training in Mansfield visit](#)

September 3, 2019; Tracy Leturgey

MANSFIELD -- U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown is set to introduce legislation to Congress next week that would require companies to provide their employees with advanced notice and increased training when adopting new technology.

He discussed his proposed "Workers' Right to Training Act of 2019" on Tuesday with a group of community leaders and worker advocates at the United SteelWorkers (USW) Local 169 in Mansfield. The meeting followed an **exclusive visit to Richland Source** on Tuesday morning.

"I see in communities like Mansfield and Dayton and Toledo and Norwalk too many cases (where) people lose jobs because of globalization, where companies shut down production here and move it overseas, and other times, they lose their jobs because of technology," Brown said.

He believes the first problem needs to be addressed by adapting the country's trade agreements and tax policy to favor domestic production -- something he says President Donald Trump is "not really serious about."

"But in terms of technology, companies are going to do that. They should. They want to be more efficient," Brown said.

This group of community leaders and worker advocates met with Senator Sherrod Brown Tuesday morning at the United SteelWorkers (USW) Local 169 in Mansfield.

This is inevitable and necessary progress, Brown recognizes, but he argues steps should be taken to protect the workers who lose their jobs or whose training is made obsolete because of new technology.

"I hear from workers all the time that have been displaced by these technologies," Brown said. "And we've got to make sure these workers are given notice so they know it's coming and they have a chance to re-train."

Brown has previously heard many of these concerns in Richland County. In a **December 2016 roundtable discussion**, workers at ArcelorMittal in Shelby expressed concern about potential job loss as technology becomes more integrated into their companies.

Dick Clady, an electrician only eight days away from retirement, said he worried that automation would cut into the number of jobs in Shelby.

"I see automation in the future as really cutting out a lot of jobs," Clady said at that time. "A lot of the skills I had 30 years ago are worthless today because of technology changes. There's no way I want to start again."

In a press release issued Tuesday at his more recent roundtable discussion, Brown explains how his "Workers' Right to Training Act of 2019" could "empower workers in the face of increased automation."

Specifically, Brown's proposed bill would:

- Require companies to provide 180 days advance notice to workers when new technology will change employment positions, and provide 270 days advance notice if jobs will be eliminated. Further, employers would need to bargain directly with employees on how best to implement new technology.
- Require employers to pay for and provide on-the-job training to any employees who will be affected by the introduction of new technology. Companies must either provide training to employees whose jobs will change as a result of new technology or to employees who will lose their job to help these workers obtain a different position at a similar company.
- Require employers to provide six-month severance to all workers who lose their jobs as a result of new technology.

According to Brown, because these requirements would mandate employers consult and compensate employees whose jobs are changed or lost due to technology, the legislation would ensure the adoption of technology in the workplace is done in a "just way for workers."

"I'm not wed to them exactly, (but) they seem -- from people we've talked to -- to be the best prescription to do it right, to give people that kind of notice so they can plan their lives better and they can have a chance at getting re-trained," Brown said.

During the roundtable discussion, the vice president of Teamsters Local 40 Dave Funk suggested a "sliding sale."

Dave Funk, the vice president of Teamsters Local 40, spoke up at Tuesday's roundtable discussion to suggest that Brown consider the size of companies when bringing the proposed "Workers' Right to Training Act of 2019" to Congress next week.

"The bigger the company, the longer the vision," Funk said.

He explained how he thinks it would be most appropriate for larger companies to give more notice than smaller companies. Meanwhile, Brown scribbled notes to transcribe Funk's suggestion.

Others like Mid-Ohio Area Labor Council president, Norm Shoemaker chimed in to note the positive impacts of automation in some locations.

“In our shop, technology has allowed us to take more of the market,” he said.

This in turn has allowed for more employees to be hired.

At this time, Brown said he’s heard from a few Democratic senators who are interested in his proposal. He believes it’ll be more challenging to gain Republican support.

“(But) ideas like this always start with one or two or three people and they grow. So far everybody’s thought it was a good idea who’s heard about it,” Brown said.

## St. Clairsville – September 4, 2019

### WTOV: Senator visits Belmont College for workers’ rights

Wednesday 4, 2019; Brittany Grego

BELMONT COUNTY, Ohio — More companies are adopting new technology while workers are left behind. One U.S. senator is trying to help.

U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown stopped by Belmont College for a round table discussion as he introduces legislation to support workers in this digital age.

Senator Sherrod Brown hosts a roundtable at Belmont College as he introduces legislation to support workers in the face of increased automation.

“We can't tell the companies not to update and be more efficient moving forward with technology, but we can tell the companies to treat their workers with more respect than they do,” said Senator Brown.

Brown met with members of Belmont College, Project Best, the Belmont-Harrison Vocational School, along with other labor organizations and worker advocates.

The discussion focused on how they all can help employees in the face of increased automation.

"The reality is, we live in a world where technology is getting ahead of us; we're taking away jobs with every automation," said Co-Chairwoman of Project Best, Ginny Favede.

Favede says new technology usually replaces workers, and she's seen many examples of that in local restaurants and factories.

Senator Brown is working on introducing the “Workers’ Right to Training Act” which would require companies to provide advance notice of technological changes.

“When technology changes and workers are thrown out of work, those companies need to re-train those workers, give them severance, give them warning,” said Brown.

“I love that Senator Brown is looking at that on a national level and addressing it,” said Favede.

Brown will introduce the *Workers’ Right To Training Act of 2019* when congress reconvenes.

### [WTRF: Senator Sherrod Brown hosts round-table discussion on Ohio jobs](#)

September 4, 2019; Taylor Long

BELMONT COUNTY, Ohio (WTRF) – Ohio jobs were in the forefront Wednesday, as Senator Sherrod Brown hosted a round-table discussion on the topic.

It was all in an effort to adapt to the change in technology.

Senator Brown (D-Ohio) introduced legislation to empower workers in the face of increased automation. In other words, how people are losing jobs due to robotic technology and ways to combat them.

He sat down with the people in the state that see first hand what is going on and gather their ideas.

Senator Brown is set to introduce the ‘Worker’s Right to Training Act of 2019’.

Included at the round-table were labor organizations and worker advocates.

### [Times Leader: Brown: Retrain workers for automated jobs](#)

September 5, 2019; Robert A. Defrank

ST. CLAIRSVILLE — U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown, D-Ohio is looking at the problem of new technology making jobs obsolete.

On Wednesday, Brown spoke with educators, union leaders, and the construction industry labor-management organization Project BEST at Belmont College about retraining options and available help.

Brown intends to introduce the Workers’ Right to Training Act of 2019 when Congress reconvenes next week. He is seeking co-sponsors and visiting sites around Ohio.

Brown had harsh words for what he described as globalization, bad trade agreements and bad tax laws that give tax breaks to companies that move jobs overseas.

*“We also need to help workers deal with technology. When that technology changes and workers are thrown out of work, those companies need to retrain those workers. They need to give them severance,”* Brown said.

Brown’s bill would require employees provide six-month severance to workers who lose their jobs as a result of new technology. It would also call for companies to provide on-the-job training to any employee affected by introduction of new technology.

In addition, the legislation would require companies to provide 180 days advanced notice to workers when new technology will change employment positions, and 270 days' notice if jobs will be eliminated. Employers would bargain directly with employees on how best to implement new technology.

*"We can tell the companies to treat their workers with more respect than they do,"* Brown said.

During the meeting, several people pointed out examples such as drones used instead of line workers to inspect power lines and transformers, driverless vehicles, and fewer steelworkers required to make steel. Others noted many workers cannot afford to seek additional schooling or training while maintaining their jobs.

Many shared personal stories prior to the meeting.

*"We know firsthand. I was employed in the utility industry for 38 years. We know the challenges technology brings, whether it's good or bad,"* Ed Good, representing the Upper Ohio Valley Central Labor Council, said. He added while there are many benefits to technological advancement, there is often a human cost, and he commended any assistance for those who have been adversely impacted.

Good pointed out changes in the utility industry, such as the shift from coal to gas plants.

*"Gas plants produce more electricity and heating people, but those that are left behind on the coal side, they have these transportable skills they can move into some of these other gas plants or some of these other industries. Someone who can monitor flows or work on different pieces of equipment in the coal industry or the utility industry can also transfer those skills."*

*"When you go into Sheets and you actually go in and you utilize the kiosk, that's someone's job that technology's replacing,"* Ginny Favede, Project BEST co-chairwoman, said. *"Sen. Brown is actually attacking that on a national level."*

*"We're excited to see the senator come down and listen to the people,"* Ed Mowrer, Energy Institute Manager at the college, said. *"At the college, we've traditionally done retraining for any group of displaced people. ... We're ready and prepared to offer any training, particularly in high technology."*

Mowrer added the future will likely have opportunities related to the oil and gas industry or the plastics industry working with by-products of a potential ethane cracker plant that may come to the Shadyside area. Mowrer said many of these jobs will require higher training.

*"We're seeing this transition in the Ohio Valley with the influx of what we consider to be new manufacturing jobs,"* he said. *"Manufacturing has changed wholly from what our grandparents are used to now."*

Melissa Rataiczak, director of Workforce Development with the college, agreed.

*"We can fulfill training for onboarding of new employees. We can provide additional training for employees once they are there,"* she said.

Lou Fisher, representing Columbia Gas Ohio Utility Workers and East Ohio Regional Waste Authority in Belmont County, said he sees potential in the legislation and hopes for its passage.

*"We've had meter readers at the gas company be displaced through automatic meter readers," he said. "At the treatment plant, they've put in a new belt line that used to have to be monitored. Now it's automated."*

## Youngstown – September 5, 2019

### Business Journal: Brown, Labor Leaders Lament Automation's Toll

September 6, 2019; George Nelson

YOUNGSTOWN, Ohio — U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown said Thursday he still is holding out hope that General Motors might select its idled Lordstown plant to produce one of the 20 electric vehicle models it plans to roll out over the next few years.

Brown, D-Ohio, was at the Youngstown Historical Center for Industry and Labor for a roundtable with representatives of area unions, trades and educational institutions. The topic was legislation Brown plans to introduce next week to mitigate the impact of automation on workers.

Meeting with reporters before the forum, Brown said he speaks "with some regularity" with GM CEO Mary Barra and is in contact with representatives of the United Auto Workers and Lordstown Motors who are in discussions to acquire the plant. Barra "continues to put off" discussing the plant, the fate of which is subject to negotiations underway between the UAW and U.S. automakers, including GM, he said.

"We don't give up hope that these negotiations can bear some fruit," Brown said. Adapting the Lordstown plant for manufacturing electric vehicles of similar size to the Chevrolet Cruze, which GM manufactured there until March, would require "minimal retooling," he said.

During the roundtable, Brown asked whether local GM workers retained any hope that GM might place an electric vehicle at the plant.

"There is a slim hope," responded Mike Aurilio, recording secretary for UAW Local 1112, which represented workers at the plant. Aurilio said GM appeared to go "out of its way to kill the Cruze."

The vehicle wasn't marketed in the West, nor was its J.D. Power quality ranking promoted.

"They never did any advertising," he said. "They always forget what the taxpayers did," Brown said, referring to the federal bailout of GM and Chrysler a decade ago, a decision he still maintains was the right one.

Brown hosted the roundtable to outline his proposed Workers' Right to Training Act of 2019. The legislation would require companies provide 180 days advance notice to workers when new technology will change employment positions, as well as provide 270 days if jobs will be eliminated.

It would further require employers to pay for and provide on-the-job training to employees who will be affected by the introduction of new technology. Companies would have to provide training to employees whose jobs will change as a result of new technology, or to employees who will lose their

jobs and to help them obtain a different position at a similar company. Employers also would have to provide six months severance to all workers who lose their jobs as a result of new technology.

"I talk to workers all the time who say their companies see them as simply a cost to be minimized. That's the reason why wages have been so stagnant, and with more technology we've got to keep workers front and center on this," Brown said.

"As technology improves, service workers' jobs are being eliminated," said Deb Bindas, regional director for Council 8 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees. Among her membership, these positions include medical transcribers, boiler maintenance workers and meter readers.

Postal workers have been similarly impacted by technology, said Henry Gomez, president of National Association of Letter Carriers Branch 385. An issue in current negotiations is the U.S. Postal Service's desire to eliminate a provision that prevents them from laying off workers who have been on the job six years or longer.

Joe Tauro, representing Local 880 of the United Food and Commercial Workers, noted that when he started working at Giant Eagle there were 10 meat cutters in each store. Now there are two or three, a decline he attributes in part to automation, as well as lack of local population growth, competition coming into the area and changes in how people shop.

Tauro lamented the increased implementation of self-checkout stations in retailers and handheld devices that allow shoppers to check out items as they shop.

Don Boone, president of United Steelworkers Local 979, said his workforce has been more than halved but makes the same amount of steel.

Boone and other labor representatives voiced a familiar complaint during the roundtable: the lack of young people entering the skilled trades because their parents and other adults impressed on them the need to go to college. Boone is short about 40 people to fill industrial maintenance positions, he said.

Industrial maintenance is among the voids Eastern Gateway Community College has identified, said Vice President Art Daly. To meet that need, EGCC is introducing an industrial maintenance program in January.

"It's better if we talk to them younger," said Tony DiTommaso, secretary/treasurer of the Western Reserve Building Trades Council. He reported a career fair is planned for Sept. 26 to acquaint students with the opportunities and benefits available in the building trades.

Bill Padisak, president of Mahoning/Trumbull Central Labor Council, lamented the human toll job losses from automation are exacting. Padisak, who also is chairman of Meridian HealthCare's board of directors, said the agency is seeing increased incidences of depression in addition to alcohol and drug use.

"There's clearly frustration about companies that always are looking to replace people through automation," Brown said following the roundtable, adding that one concern being overlooked by employers is who will be left to buy their products if they keep throwing people out of work.

"That's the fundamental reason for this bill, to give people the opportunity to be retrained and to encourage companies to put more premium on their workers," he said.

### [Tribune Chronicle: Sen. Brown touts workers legislation](#)

September 6, 2019; David Skolnick

YOUNGSTOWN — U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown will introduce a bill next week to provide resources to workers when technology affects their jobs, but acknowledged it will take at least a year or two for it to have a chance of becoming law.

Brown, a Cleveland Democrat, was at the Youngstown Historical Center of Industry & Labor for a Thursday roundtable discussion with area labor leaders about the proposal and the impact technology has had on workers.

When asked before the event about the likelihood of it passing, Brown said, *"The more people learn about this, the more people realize we've got to do something when technology displaces workers."*

He added, *"I understand this president won't support it today, but we continue to educate people. We continue to put the pressure on."*

Brown said he's playing a "long game" with the proposal.

*"I hope the long game is a year or two, not five or 10,"* he said.

The Workers' Right to Training Act of 2019 would:

I Require companies to provide 180 days notice to workers when new technology will change employment positions and 270 days notice if jobs will be eliminated.

I Require employers to pay for and provide on-the-job training to any employee affected by the introduction of new technology.

I Require employers to provide six-month severance to workers who lose their jobs as a result of new technology.

Bill Padisak, president of the Mahoning Trumbull AFL-CIO and a roundtable participant, said, *"Thousands and thousands of workers have lost jobs through automation. This bill is a great idea. It will help so many people who have lost jobs."*

Brown said many companies *"see labor as just another cost. As they develop new technologies, we want to make sure that workers are taken into account."*

The senator was asked about Lordstown Motors Corp., which is negotiating with General Motors to purchase the idled Lordstown facility to produce an electric vehicle.

Brown said he's *"still holding out"* hope that GM will place its own electric vehicle line at the 53-year-old plant that went idle in March.

*"It would be minimal retooling,"* Brown said.



GM officials haven't expressed interest in putting a new line in Lordstown and are discussing a sale of the plant with Lordstown Motors.

*"We don't give up hope that they will ... that these negotiations (with the United Auto Workers) can bear some fruit," Brown said.*

Michael Aurilio, United Auto Workers Local 1112 recording secretary and a roundtable participant, wasn't as hopeful.

*"There's a slim chance" GM will put a new line in to replace the Chevrolet Cruze," he said.*

*"I'm not really optimistic," Aurilio added. "They may sit on it for three to four years and reopen the plant. (GM) is more of a foreign car company. They build more vehicles outside the country than in it. The Cruze was selling well and it seems like GM went out of its way to kill it."*

### [WKBN: Sen. Sherrod Brown talks to workers about protecting jobs against new technology](#)

September 5, 2019; WKBN Staff

YOUNGSTOWN, Ohio (WKBN) – U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown made a stop in the Valley Thursday to introduce the Workers' Right to Training Act of 2019, which would help workers when new technology threatens their jobs.

Brown talked about the legislation at the Youngstown Historical Center of Industry and Labor. He met with leaders from local labor organizations.

Brown said the legislation would make companies give workers advanced notice when they bring in new technology.

*"As they develop new technologies, we want to make sure that workers are taken into account. That workers, if they're offered job retraining to do those jobs. If they are going to lay off because of technology, that those workers get notice so they can plan their futures, but always that they get a chance to retrain for these jobs."*

The company would have to pay for on-the-job training or help workers find a new job.

## [Toledo – September 6, 2019](#)

### [WTOL: Ohio Senator Sherrod Brown introducing new legislation that would protect workers throughout Ohio](#)

September 6, 2019; Amy Steigerwald

As technology advances, jobs can become less important. But Senator Sherrod Brown is introducing new legislation to protect Ohio workers.

The "Workers Right to Training Act" will protect workers when their jobs are replaced by machinery, robots or any new technology that a company introduces.

*"There are going to be changes obviously, technology that they look at workers as a cost to be minimized," said Ohio Senator Sherrod Brown.*

The bill would ensure workers are given advance notice when a company decides to implement new technology and mandates a company provide workers additional training.

Mike Sawaya Jr. works at Jeep and is glad Senator Brown is introducing this bill. He says his job could easily be replaced by a machine

"We actually use guns to put the certain foam in that keeps the impact from really causing too much injury in an accident or something like that so that could easily be replaced by machines," said Sawaya.

Under Senator Brown's bill, employers would have to provide 180 days notice when new technology will change jobs and 270 days notice when they eliminate jobs because of new technology. It will also require them to pay 6-months severance to workers who lose their jobs because of new technology.

"Workers get displaced from automation, we've seen it for decades, and this gives workers some protections that they didn't have before," said Senator Brown.

Senator Sherrod Brown will introduce the legislation next week.

### [Toledo Blade: Automation puts Toledo jobs at risk, but Sherrod brown has a plan to help workers](#)

September 6, 2019; Liz Skalka

Like most federal lawmakers, Sen. Sherrod Brown (D, Ohio) has spent his summer recess crisscrossing his home state, pitching a very on-brand piece of legislation for a senator who frequently evokes the "dignity of work" — a bill designed to mitigate the impact of increasing automation in manufacturing.

In Toledo, he found a receptive audience well attuned to the threat posed by robots replacing workers who have spent generations building things.

"There was a report not too long ago that ranked Toledo as a city in the country most susceptible and most in danger to the changes that automation brings, so it's a concern for our community, and it's a concern borne by our proud 180-year history as a city that's not afraid of hard work," Toledo Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz said Friday, introducing Mr. Brown at the UAW Local 12 Hall.

The report Mr. Kapszukiewicz was referring to came from the Brookings Institution, a Washington think tank with a grim prediction for greater Toledo: It ranked the Glass City as the place in the country most vulnerable to job loss because of automation, with jobs in the service industry and trucking most at risk.

Mr. Brown discussed his bill, the Workers' Right to Training Act of 2019, at the union hall, standing alongside workers from Fiat Chrysler's Toledo Assembly Complex who make Jeep Gladiators and Wranglers. A sign outside warns, "Autos not built in America are not welcome in this parking lot." But workers say the rule is no longer strictly enforced. (Mr. Brown made a point to say he arrived in a Jeep Cherokee.)

"Too many workers are getting left behind when companies adopt new technology," the senator said, joined by two autoworkers who endorsed his proposal.

Toledo's Fiat Chrysler plant, which employs 7,500 workers, has been largely spared the cutbacks at other auto plants thanks to strong Wrangler sales. The Wrangler was Jeep's best-selling model in 2018, delivering more than 240,000 units.

"In Toledo we're lucky. We have a unique product called the Jeep Wrangler. That's not the same for every auto plant," said Lucas County Commissioner Pete Gerken, a retired Jeep employee.

"You saw what happened to Lordstown. If we don't keep our eye on the ball with what happened to Lordstown, someday it could happen to Toledo," he said, referring to the shuttered General Motors plant in northeast Ohio that used to produce the Chevrolet Cruze sedan.

Mr. Gerken described automation as both a threat and an opportunity.

"Let's make sure we have a product we can build here and sell, and create more jobs with automated help," he said. "You can't just say next week, 'You have a new machine. I haven't trained you in how to run it, and if you don't run it right I'm going to get rid of you.' That's unfair."

The scenario laid out by Mr. Gerken is what Mr. Brown's legislation aims to address. It would require manufacturers to provide 180 days' notice to workers when new technology will affect their positions, and 270 days' notice when jobs are being eliminated. Employers also would be required to provide and pay for on-the-job training for positions being affected by the introduction of new technology. Workers who lose their jobs because of new technology would receive six months of severance pay.

"We're seeing technology change faster. We're seeing attacks on unions who can often protect against some of these changes. Government needs to come down on the side of workers, especially when we have a government in Washington who has betrayed workers so many times in the last two years," Mr. Brown said.

Brian Sims, 55, who's been an autoworker since he was 19, said Mr. Brown's bill takes an important first step to address an issue he and his colleagues began encountering nearly 20 years ago.

"It's a start," he said, "that can take us more toward the future."

The future of manufacturing, especially across battleground states in Middle America, will be a focus of the 2020 presidential race. President Donald Trump campaigned by appealing to workers feeling left behind by outsourcing, automation, and an evolving industrial landscape. Mr. Brown, who briefly considered running for president, said the best — and perhaps only — path to the White House for a Democrat runs through workers, like the ones who expressed support for former Vice President Joe Biden, Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders, and Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren when asked by a Blade reporter who they like so far in the race.

"The Democrats will undoubtedly win this election against Trump if they talk about the dignity of work and honoring and respecting work and issues like this," Mr. Brown said.

[NBC 24 News: Sherrod Brown discussed legislation that will protect workers in cases of new technology](#)

September 6, 2019; NBC 24 Staff

TOLEDO, Ohio — On Friday at UAW Local 12 Hall, Sen. Sherrod Brown spoke to Toledo workers about his new Workers' Right to Training Act. The law will mandate better training and financial support for Ohio workers when technology affects the status of their jobs.

The Workers' Right to Training Act states that companies must give 180 days notice to workers whenever new technology is about to change worker positions and 270 days notice when new technology eliminates jobs. Employers will be required to consult their workers on how to best utilize new technology. Companies will also need to fund relevant training to anyone affected by such changes, including employees who will be laid off. For layoffs they need to issue six months of severance pay.

"We want to make sure this legislation simply says that if they're gonna displace workers, they've gotta give notification and give severance pay and, if at all possible, retrain those workers at the company to do those jobs," Sen. Brown said.

Sen. Brown insists on giving Ohio workers the best possible support in times when automation is affecting labor.